

Message Text

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17

ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-03 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 OMB-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 ACDA-05

MMS-01 /093 W

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P R 010632Z JUL 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1739

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMCONSUL LENINGRAD

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

CINCLANT

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CINCLANT FOR POLAD

BEIRUT PASS BAGHDAD

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, UR, SO

SUBJECT: PRAVDA ON SOMALIA

1. IN A PRAVDA COMMENTARY (JUNE 29), VLADIMIR PERESADA
(AS OTHERS BEFORE HIM) INDIRECTLY DENIES THE PRESENCE OF A
SOVIET BASE AT BERBERA BY CITING SOMALI FOREIGN MINISTER
GALIB'S CLAIMS THAT AMERICAN SATELLITE PHOTOGRAPHY SHOWS A
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FISH WAREHOUSE, RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS, AND HIGHWAYS UNDER

CONSTRUCTION. PERESADA CONTENDS THIS ISN'T THE FIRST EXAMPLE OF "CLUMSY ATTEMPTS" SUCH AS THESE, AND RECALLS "LAST YEAR'S CONTINUOUS FABRICATIONS BY THE PENTAGON" THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD A MILITARY BASE AT THE IRAQI PORT OF UM QASR. HE ARGUES THAT THE WHOLE ISSUE IS THE MOST RECENT PUFF IN A DISINFORMATION SMOKE SCREEN LAID BY WESTERN AND AMERICAN PROPAGANDISTS DESIGNED TO COVER U.S. MILITARY EXPANSION AT DIEGO GARCIA. HOWEVER, PERESADA CREDITS THE PRESS OF THE LITTORAL COUNTRIES WITH THE WISDOM TO RECOGNIZE THAT THESE "IMPERIALIST" EFFORTS ARE INHIBITING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF UN DECISIONS CALLING FOR THE MAINTENANCE OF THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A "PEACE ZONE."

2. PRAVDA (JUNE 30) CARRIES ON PAGE ONE A BRIEF TASS ITEM IN WHICH THE "GOVERNMENT NEWSPAPER" OF SOMALIA PROFUSELY PRAISES THE USSR AS A "TRUE FRIEND" OF THE AFRICAN PEOPLE, AND A COUNTRY WHICH EXTENDED THE HAND OF FRIENDSHIP FROM THE FIRST DAY OF SOMALIA'S INDEPENDENCE.

3. COMMENT: AS THE CONGRESSIONAL INSPECTION TRIP DRAWS NEARER, MOSCOW COULD BE INTENSIFYING ITS PRESS CAMPAIGN DESIGNED TO PLAY UP THE WARMTH OF SOVIET-SOMALIA RELATIONS. THE ULTIMATE AIM, HOWEVER, IS PROBABLY TO CAST DOUBT ON WHATEVER DAMAGING DISCOVERIES THE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION MIGHT MAKE IN THE SOMALI DESERTS. THE PRAVDA COMMENTARY RAISES THE LEVEL OF SOVIET VERBIAGE ON THE CHARGE ABOUT THE SOMALI BASES, BUT IT LEAVES THE EXPLICIT DENIALS IN THE MOUTHS OF SOMALIS. STOESEL

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